

Abstract Narrative: A Proposal for a New Narrative Mode

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Abstract

This paper proposes and examines a novel narrative mode, "Abstract Narrative," stemming from my observations and creative explorations. Building upon my previous work with retrofiction, I posit that Abstract Narrative offers a unique approach to storytelling, distinct from established genres like mystery or surrealism. This mode, inspired by abstract arts across various disciplines, prioritizes an abstract presentation of narrative elements, leading to reader confusion and open interpretation akin to the cinematic works of David Lynch or films like "The Fountain." I will illustrate this concept through an analysis of my own short story, "Sacred Geometry," and argue for the inclusion of Abstract Narrative within the established framework of narratology, alongside existing modes such as psychological and historical narratives.

1. Introduction

As a writer and observer of narrative forms, I have long been fascinated by the boundaries of storytelling. My previous work with retrofiction explored the manipulation of temporal linearity, and I now seek to further expand the possibilities of narrative expression through what I term "Abstract Narrative." This concept arises from a desire to move beyond conventional structures and explore the power of abstraction in conveying meaning. The motivation behind this exploration is a belief that fostering more open and varied writing styles will encourage greater creative freedom, particularly among young writers, and ultimately enrich the literary landscape.

2. Defining Abstract Narrative

Abstract Narrative, as I conceive it, is not synonymous with nonsense or incoherence. Instead, it is a deliberate and structured approach to storytelling that prioritizes abstract representation over explicit exposition. This abstraction draws inspiration from other artistic domains, including:

- Abstract Painting: The use of non-representational forms and colors to evoke emotional and conceptual responses.
- Abstract Poetry: The exploration of language beyond its literal meaning, focusing on sound, rhythm, and imagery.
- IDM and Glitch Music: The manipulation of sonic elements to create complex and often ambiguous auditory experiences.
- Sacred Geometry Architecture: The use of geometric patterns and proportions to convey symbolic and spiritual meanings.

In Abstract Narrative, plot, character, and setting are often presented in a fragmented, non-linear, and symbolic manner. The reader is not provided with clear explanations or resolutions, but rather invited to engage with the narrative in a more active and interpretive way. This approach creates a sense of disorientation and ambiguity, encouraging the reader to construct their own meaning from the available fragments.

3. "Sacred Geometry": An Example of Abstract Narrative

My short story, "Sacred Geometry," serves as a practical example of this narrative mode. The story centers on my experience within St. Nicolas church, where my consciousness becomes entangled with the philosophical musings of Platon, Aristotle, and Al-Ghazali. This entanglement is presented in a kaleidoscopic and fragmented manner, mirroring the complex geometric patterns found within the church architecture. The narrative does not provide a linear progression of events; instead, it offers a series of impressions and reflections, culminating in a moment of realization within the church's sacred space. The reader is left to interpret the significance of these reflections and the nature of the realization.

4. Abstract Narrative and Existing Narrative Modes

It is important to distinguish Abstract Narrative from established narrative modes. While it shares some similarities with surrealism in its use of non-realistic imagery, Abstract Narrative is not primarily concerned with exploring the subconscious or dreamlike states. It also differs from mystery genres, which typically rely on a structured process of revelation.

Existing narrative modes, such as psychological narrative (which focuses on internal states) and historical narrative (which focuses on factual events), offer valuable tools for storytelling. However, I argue that Abstract Narrative provides a distinct and valuable addition to the narratological toolkit. While Vladimir Propp's structural analysis of folktales provides a valuable framework, Abstract narrative aims to break free of those structures.

5. Arguments for Inclusion

The inclusion of Abstract Narrative as a recognized narrative mode would offer several benefits:

- Expanded Creative Possibilities: It would provide writers with a framework for exploring unconventional storytelling techniques.
- Encouraging Reader Engagement: It would promote active interpretation and critical thinking among readers.
- Promoting Innovation: It would encourage the development of new and experimental forms of literature.
- Avoiding Nonsense: It provides a structure for the non-linear, that is not random, and that provides an overall meaning.

6. Conclusion

Abstract Narrative, as I have outlined it, represents a potential avenue for expanding the boundaries of storytelling. By embracing abstraction and ambiguity, writers can create narratives that resonate on a deeper, more personal level with readers. I believe that this mode has the potential to enrich the literary landscape and inspire a new generation of writers to explore the power of narrative in unconventional ways. The exploration of this method of writing is not a path to nonsense but a way to express a meaningful story in a non-traditional way.

References

[SACRED GEOMETRY - Darko Runchev](#)